

# Opinion

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## Key to the best

National associations of history, science and mathematics teachers will be holding their annual conventions this week, and one topic is likely to be discussed at all three meetings — how well each discipline is being taught and learned in the nation's elementary and secondary schools.

For members of the Organization of American Historians, who hold their 78th annual convention in Minneapolis, Thursday through Sunday, the questions are how much history is being taught and how well. Most school systems incorporate history course in their social studies curriculum, together with civics, current events, economics, psychology and other subjects.

"Educational data collection is today so inadequate that no one can accurately say how history is taught, how well it is taught, what is taught or what is learned," Professor Diane Ravitch of Columbia University's Teachers College wrote in the magazine American Educator.

Secretary of Education William J. Bennett has echoed Ravitch's sentiment. The teaching of history "is a mess right now," he said, during a taping of an interview show. "When you say history, you can't be confident you're talking about any single thing ... In fact, most school history is not history, it's social studies."

What to do about the shortage of qualified mathematics and science teachers is likely to be discussed at the National Science Teachers Association annual convention in Cincinnati, Thursday through Sunday, and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics in San Antonio, Texas, Wednesday through Saturday.

Many of the most able scientists and mathematicians graduating from college are going into industry rather than teaching. School systems are filling the gap with teachers from other disciplines that are experiencing a personnel surplus. At the same time, states are increasing the number of science courses that high school students must complete to graduate.

"As a consequence, we're seeing a massive movement of unqualified people, who would otherwise be 'surplus,' into science classes. And that in turn is affecting, has affected and will affect the quality of science education," Bill G. Aldridge, executive director of the National Science Teachers Association, told a reporter for Education Week.

To try to improve the quality of science teachers, the association is preparing professional certification standards for science teachers. The certification would not replace state teacher certification but would give an employer evidence that a science teacher has met high professional standards. Aldridge said he thought as many as 70 percent of the high school and 90 percent of the grade school science teachers would be unable to pass the professional certification test.

But such a test still will not eliminate the shortage of qualified teachers. Money is the key, and as long as the public refuses to compete for the best, then their children will have to settle for the least.

## Look us over

The problem with headquarters is that most of the people working in them never want to leave them.

Dave Kitchell, Tribune sports editor, reported Saturday that despite having perhaps the best high school baseball facility in Indiana, Kokomo will not get a regional tournament.

Kitchell says the Kokomo Sectional winner probably will, go to Logansport, where the difference in fields is like night and day.

Logansport does not have lights, which means games are played at 10 a.m., 1 and 4 p.m. The winner of the second semifinal game virtually plays a doubleheader.

Logansport's field also is on top of a hill where there's lots of wind but little shade.

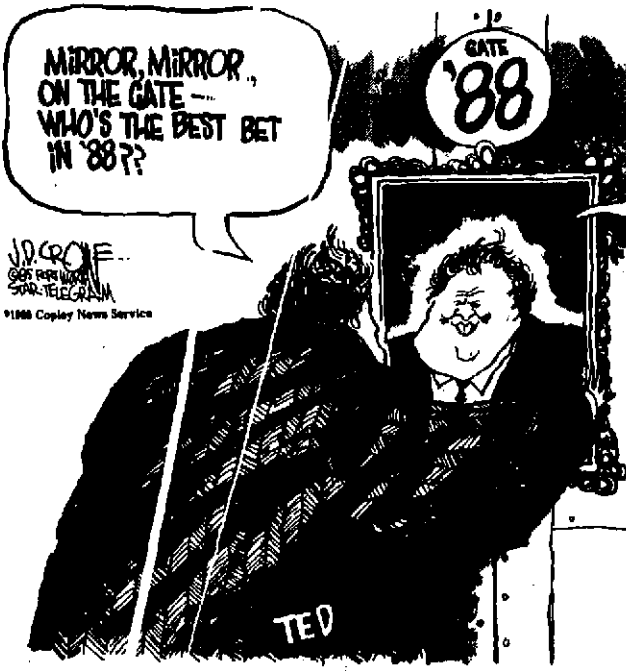
If you've been out to Kokomo's Highland Park Stadium lately, you know what that facility is shapping up to be. When that work is finished, Kitchell believes it will rank only behind Bush Stadium in Indianapolis.

Kokomo High School Athletic Director Ron Barsh tried to get the IHSAA to change its mind. He sent the association pictures and articles about the local park, and told it about the 4,000 permanent seats.

What Barsh couldn't do was to persuade an IHSAA official to leave his comfortable Indianapolis headquarters. If he can do that next year, he is sure Kokomo will get the regional tournament.

Of course, anyone who has been in the service, knows how difficult it sometimes can be to get anyone to leave headquarters. Oh, they occasionally show up, but not when you want them.

Maybe Kokomo would have better luck if it was closer than 50 miles to the IHSAA. Maybe Barsh is going at it the wrong way. Instead of trying to persuade the IHSAA to come here, he should get Kokomo to move there.



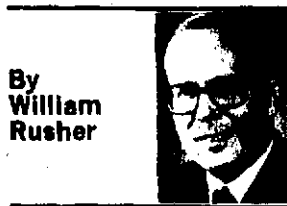
BUSH 'N' BAKER, KIRKPATRICK 'N' KEMP, ALL O' THE DOLES AND EVEN BONZO THE CHIMP. YA GOT QUOMO 'N' HART, BRADLEY 'N' BABBITT, THE GRINCH WHO SOLE CHRISTMAS AND THEN THE EASTER RABBIT... BOY GEORGE 'N' MADONNA, DOROTHY 'N' TOTO, TOO... ALL THE MOPPETS AND ALL THE GREMLINS!... AND THEN, MAYBE... YOU.

DON'T THAT MIRROR JUST CRACK YOU UP?!

# Are the good guys in black hats?

NEW YORK — If you think the world is simply a stage on which the Good Guys (conveniently wearing white hats) contend against the Bad Guys (black hats), you haven't been studying the situation in Mozambique. For sheer cursed complexity and a near-random distribution of merits and demerits, few corners of the globe these days can equal it.

For some people, of course — including some notable conservatives — the situation in Mozambique represents simplicity itself. President Samora Machel's government is communist, right? And his domestic foes, called "Renamo" for short, are waging a guerrilla war that not only



By William Rusher

has Machel's regime on the ropes in a number of provinces but regularly knocks out the electric power in Maputo, the capital. So we're for the "freedom fighters," right?

Well, not exactly, because nothing in this situation is quite what it seems. Machel is noilly, but neither is he one of the really hard-line leftists in the Maputo regime. A year ago he agreed to, and did, stop anti-South African guerrillas from using Mozambique as a base, in return for South Africa's promise to quit helping Renamo. Recently he has begun moving away from Marxist domestic nostrums toward free-enterprise solutions, especially in the vital agricultural sector of the economy — a process which, if it continues and succeeds, will tilt Mozambique away from Moscow. For that very reason, the hard-line leftists devoutly hope it will fall.

And those "freedom fighters" in Renamo are a pretty mixed bag, too. Quite apart from their right to wear white hats, however, there is a very serious question as to just how ready they are to provide political leadership to a post-Machel Mozambique. It would do the West precious little good to connive at the downfall of Machel, if the net effect was to create a power vacuum into which Moscow could rush agents and forces far more subservient to its will.

So the Reagan administration has adopted a cautious policy of encouraging Machel's slow but perceptible drift toward genuine non-alignment, even to the extent of approving "non-lethal" aid of various sorts — mostly agricultural — to his regime.

Taken in combination with what some hard-right conservatives regard as the administration's squishy-soft policies toward Angola and Namibia (South West Africa), this has enraged them beyond the bounds of common sense. An advertisement in

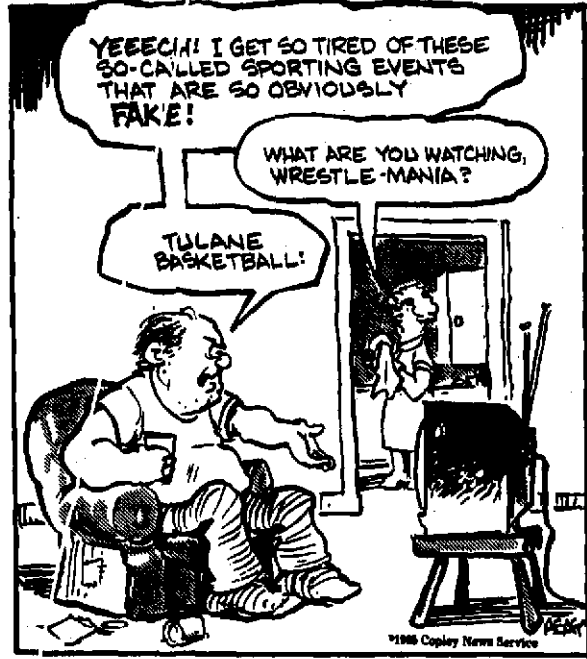
several key newspapers recently demanded, in big black letters, "Why is Chester Crocker trying to sell 20 million black Africans into communist slavery?"

Now, Chester Crocker is President Reagan's assistant secretary of state for African affairs — a gentle ex-professor at Georgetown University who has been the chief author and exponent of Reagan's much-execrated policy of "constructive engagement" with South Africa. Chet Crocker may be mistaken in urging the administration to put a few of its chips on Machel, but he certainly isn't "trying" to sell 20 million Africans into communist slavery.

Significantly, the South African government — which nobody would accuse of being even the palest shade of pink — clearly doesn't think so. Its technicians have been propping up the Machel regime's ports, railroads and general economic infrastructure for years, and its only reservation, in response to a recent request for military action against Renamo, was that it would first require a lifting of the Western embargo on arms sales to South Africa, since the operation would risk depleting (for example) its supply of helicopter gunships.

The point is not that Chester Crocker is right about Machel — or even that his critics are wrong about Renamo. The point is that this is a murky, unsatisfactory situation, with very few pure white hats to be seen and quite a lot of black-and-white stripes and polka-dot styles around.

(Rusher, a syndicated columnist, has been one of the leading voices of American conservatism for more than a decade.)



## Monitor finds ...

# 'Other side' had nothing to say

I sat in on a press briefing in Washington some weeks back that could not have been one of George Shultz's better days.

The topic was Soviet-American relations. It was within hours of the announcement of Konstantin Chernenko's death, and the secretary of state was about to leave for Moscow with the U.S. delegation to the funeral rites.

The first question concerned Nicaragua. Shultz objected that the subject had been dragged in by the heels, but answered. By rough estimate, two out of three questions that followed were also about Nicaragua or the broader problem of Central America.

Shultz gave up objecting. Not much got said about Soviet-American relations. The occasion, back on March 11, was recalled by the latest issue of the Christian Science Monitor to reach my desk, specifically, by the letters to the editor.

There are four.

Paul E. Shannon of Somerville, Mass., agrees with the Monitor's editorial approval of resumption of the Contadora peace process as the best hope for avoiding a catastrophic conflict in Central America. He takes issue, however, with the paper's assertion that a draft treaty produced by the Contadora countries (Mexico, Colombia, Panama and Venezuela) was one-sided. The draft was accepted last fall by Nicaragua but rejected by the United States.

"The military provisions that apply to U.S. allies in Central America apply to Nicaragua," he wrote. "And the political provisions you criticize for being too easy on Nicaragua are exactly the same as those that apply to El Salvador, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras."

By Don Graff



W. Dean Hopkins of Lakewood, Ohio, took exception to the Monitor's editorial criticism of Nicaragua's recent election. He made the points that outside observers had affirmed that the vote was honest and that the vote for a national assembly was by proportional representation, "hardly a method to be chosen by a one-party dictatorship." Also, that Daniel Ortega's election as president was by a larger percentage of voting-age Nicaraguans (47 percent) than was Ronald Reagan's by the similar category of Americans (31 percent).

"I urge that we judge this (Nicaraguan) government by its fruits," he concluded, "rather than by the epithets we may attach to it."

Ronald Reagan's description of anti-Sandinista guerrillas as "freedom fighters" reminds Grace Wise, of La Grange, Ill., of an Abraham Lincoln riddle: How many legs would a dog have if you called his tail a leg?

"No matter what you call his tail it is still a tail," she writes. "No matter what you call the contras, they are still a terrorist group of ex-Somozan national guardsmen who have been funded for four years by the CIA with my tax dollars — and yours."

William K. Venable of Falls Church, Va., commends recent Monitor commentaries on the issues in Nicaragua as excellent journalism.

"This is a needed contrast," he continues, "to unsubstantiated statements coming from the administration."

What connects these letters with the Shultz briefing is the administration's hard-sell effort to focus public attention on Central America and build support for its hard-line approach to the problem.

As the briefing indicated, it may be almost too successful in the first respect.

But as the Monitor letters suggest, with something other than the desired response.

Of course, four letters to one newspaper do not a statistically valid opinion sampling make. But the uniformly critical attitude toward administration policy was at least intriguing in light of the Monitor's dedication to balance and impartiality.

So I telephoned the Monitor editor in charge of letters and asked why the imbalance in this particular selection.

It couldn't be helped, I was told. If a single letter on the contrary side of an issue is received, it is usually printed. But there was none in this case.

"What you get is what you use, and this is what we got."

(Graff is chief editorial columnist for Newspaper Enterprise Association.)

## Readers letters

### Sometimes you just can't win

A comment was made in a reader's letter April 4 concerning the steel mills. It said our leaders modernized the Japanese steel mills after the war in the '40s but let our steel mills down.

We cannot criticize our leaders as being the only ones guilty of contributing to the deteriorated condition of U.S. steel mills. The Reagan administration gave the steel mills a huge tax break in order to encourage mill modernization. But what did they do with the money saved? They are interested primarily in making money, rather than producing steel, so they invested in an oil company, where profits are more lucrative. Sometimes you can't win.

Chester L. Hanna  
3300 Orleans Drive

## Letters

"Reader letters" is your space to comment on nearly any topic, subject only to considerations of length, libel and good taste.

The shorter the letter, the sooner it can be published. The best guideline is 250 words or less. The Kokomo Tribune reserves the right to edit all letters for punctuation, grammar, brevity, good taste and libel.

If you can't type the letter, please be sure it is handwritten legibly and clearly. Please only, please; no poems or verse.

All letters must be signed with the full name and address of the author, which will be published with letter. Include a daytime telephone number so we can verify authorship.

Address letters to: Reader letters, Kokomo Tribune, 300 N. Union St., Kokomo Ind. 46901.



## Did you know

A 1974 fire in a 25-story bank building in Sao Paulo, Brazil, claimed 189 lives.

Sinclair Lewis, the American novelist, was born in 1895.

Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Iran in 1979 after nearly 15 years in exile and urged that all foreigners be expelled from the country.

Nearly 300 persons died in a 1902 coal mine blast at Voelkingen in West Germany's Saar Basin.

Feb. 7, 1864, the Hunley, the first military submarine, went into action and sank the Housatonic, a United States warship. The Hunley was a small Confederate States vessel which carried a single torpedo fired to its bow. It, too, sank while withdrawing. Early submarines of this type were powered by a six- or eight-man crew turning a crank which drove a propeller.

The Beatles invasion began in 1964 when thousands of screaming fans welcomed the group at New York's Kennedy International Airport for their first tour of the United States.

The city of Buenos Aires, Argentina, was founded in 1535.

Mexico ceded Texas, Arizona and California to the United States in 1848.

Author Charles Dickens was born in 1812 at Portsmouth, England.

France bought one-third of the principality of Monaco in 1561.